



SILVIA ALBERTI | NW MISSOURIAN

City Manager Greg McDanel announces a 48-hour closure of South Main Street starting 7 a.m. Feb. 8 - 9 for the installation of a concrete pipe. Public safety will be directing traffic in parking lots and an alternate route will be available on Munn Avenue.

City allocates \$1.7 million

Council talks funding, announces 48-hour Main Street closure.

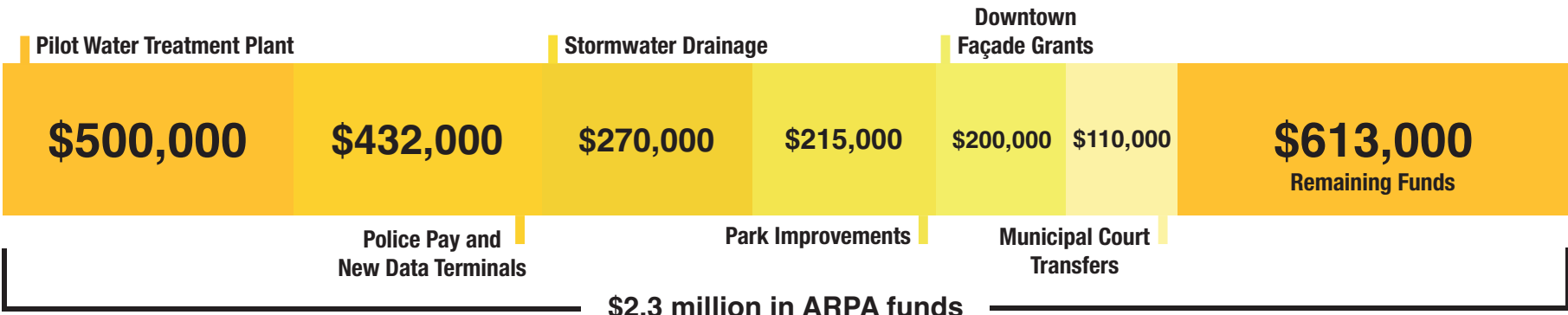
SIDNEY LOWRY
News Editor | @sidney_lowry

Plans for allocated American Rescue Plan Act funds were discussed at the Jan. 24 City Council meeting after the original allocation of \$1.7 million in December, including \$500,000 for a pilot water treatment plant. City Manager Greg McDanel also announced that Main Street would be closed from 7 a.m. Feb. 8 - 9 for construction on South Main Street. The U.S. Department of Treasury released the Final Rule Jan. 6 and expanded the way the funds could be used. The ARPA was approved March 10, 2021, for aiding in public health and economic recovery from the pandemic, in which Maryville received just over \$2.3 million. Of the \$2.3 million allocated to Maryville, the Council approved \$1.7 million of it to a variety of different places at the Dec. 13 City

Council meeting. After these allocations, Maryville has a remaining budget of \$613,000 to use from the federal funding. McDanel said these ideas could include more funding for Phase II of the South Main Improvement Project, updating traffic signals, new equipment for the city, more funding for business grants or loans and more. “The discussion is really just to start thinking of the remainder of the \$613,000,” McDanel said. “Almost anything now qualifies under the ARPA funds.” The Interim Final Rule of the ARPA funds were released in May 2021, in which the U.S. Department of Treasury asked for feedback on the rules that outlined the way those funds could be spent. The Final Rule of the ARPA released Jan. 6 made changes to those rules and broadened the restrictions of what that money could be used for.

SEE ARPA | A4

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT ALLOCATIONS FOR MARYVILLE



GRAPHIC BY SIDNEY LOWRY NEWS EDITOR

Government plans at-home COVID-19, mask distribution

KENNEDY KALVODA
News Reporter | @KKalvoda1

President Joe Biden recently announced his plan to distribute at-home tests and N95 masks as cases of COVID-19 spike in the U.S. The University Wellness Center sent out a tweet to let students know at-home tests are now available and where to order them. The plan includes distributing four at-home tests to every household and 400 million N95 masks, which will begin being distributed starting next week. The program should be fully operational by the beginning of February. Nodaway County Health Department Ad-

ministrator Tom Patterson said in an interview with the Missourian last week he was not surprised to hear about the announcement, adding that utilizing the United States Postal Service is a natural occurrence in situations like these. “Utilizing the postal service is kind of natural. If you had to get an item in the hand of every citizen by next week, whether it’s Missouri or the United States, what is one thing that’s already in place? And if you could tap into something you could utilize to accomplish that, it would naturally be the Postal Service,” Patterson said.

SEE TESTS | A4



ILLUSTRATION BY MAKAYLA POLAK DESIGN EDITOR

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Northwest hires new Library Services Director

KENNEDY KALVODA
News Reporter | @KKalvoda1

There is a new face in the B.D. Owens Library. Edward Walton is the new director of Library Services and Operations for the University as of Jan. 18.

Walton’s most recent job was the dean of the University Libraries and professor of Library Services at Southwest Baptist University, a private school in Bolivar, Missouri. Walton had this job for a little over 20 years before making the move to Northwest.

“I have a lot of experience in leadership and management. I have a lot of education related to leadership, so that’s one of the primary areas that I would bring is leadership skills, knowledge and understanding of library services and the ability to lead,” Walton said.

Walton’s move north has proved challenging in some aspects. The former Springfield native was surrounded by family prior to his 4 hour trek north. It’s forced him to make some adjustments.

He has some changes in mind for the Northwest library system. Libraries are constantly evolving, Walton said, and it’s something he’s considering when looking into ways to improve Northwest’s system.

“Besides that, the biggest new things are gonna be related to supporting student learning. That’s the primary focus and purpose of libraries,” Walton said.

Walton’s approach is to, well, be approachable, he said.

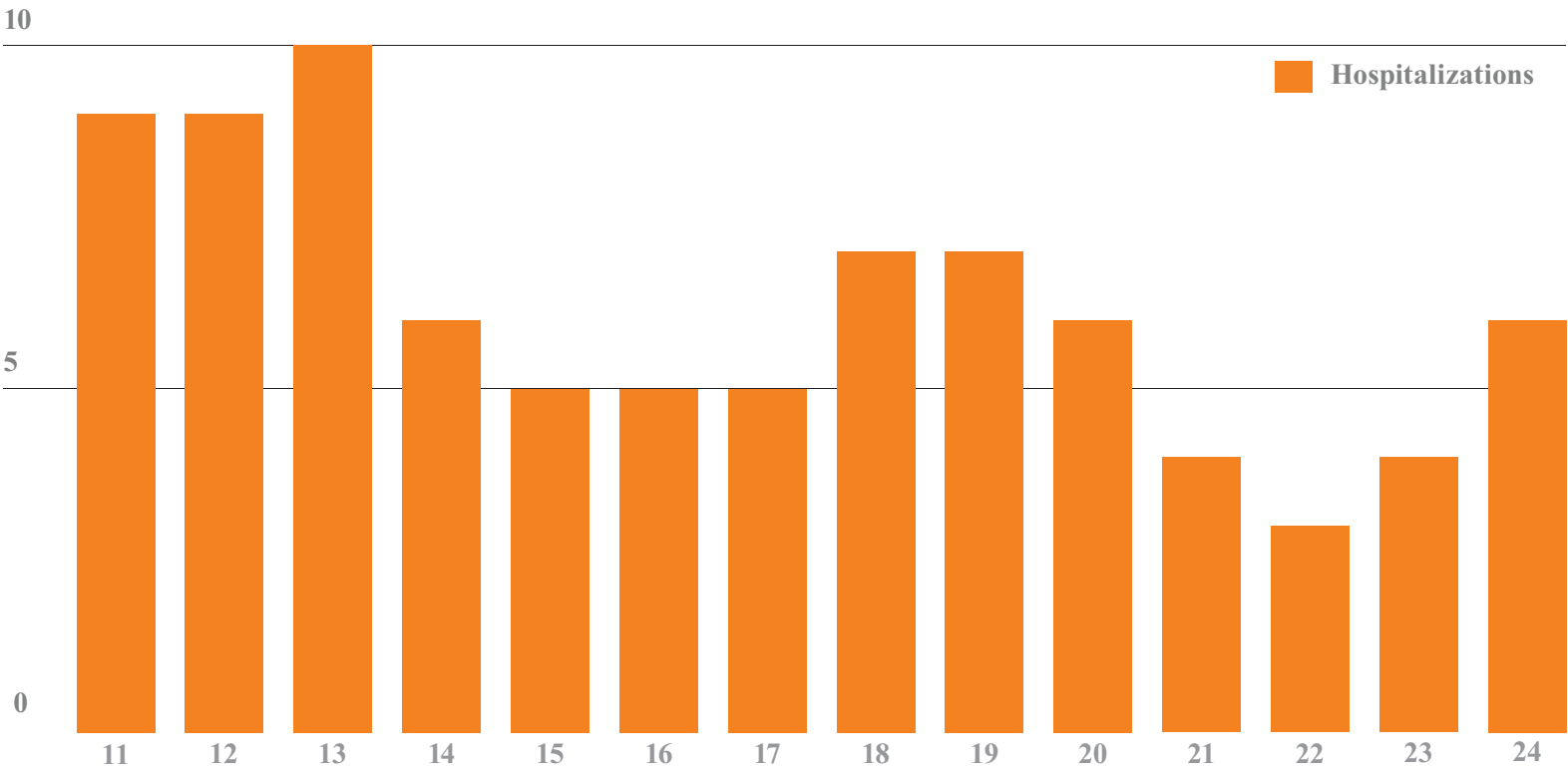
“I have an open door policy. If a student wants to come in and ask me a question, they can do that. My goal, and the library’s goal, is to help students. That’s our primary focus. So how else can we help them if they don’t walk in the door and ask?” Walton said.

Walton is looking forward to experiencing some of the area’s attractions, he said. As a fan of golf, he’s looking forward to getting on the golf course at Mozingo Lake. He expects to play a few rounds this summer.

“Through the interview process and being on campus for a week, I have really experienced some great things about the University already. Whenever I talk to any of the staff or any of the students, I am always finding them very kind towards me and willing to help, and that’s great. I really appreciate that,” Walton said.

Any students wishing to welcome him to Northwest or have any library related questions can visit OL127 in the B.D. Owens Library. If he’s there, the door will be open.

HOSPITALIZATIONS PER DAY IN NODAWAY COUNTY SINCE JAN. 11



Omicron only COVID-19 variant detected in Nodaway County

NATHAN ENGLISH
Managing Editor | @nathan_english

After multiple record-setting Mondays, Nodaway County has experienced a slight dip in daily positive COVID-19 cases. The Nodaway County Health Department announced 60 new cases of the virus for Jan. 26, the lowest amount of new cases on a Monday since Jan. 3.

“It does feel better this week,” said Tom Patterson, administrator of NCHD.

The county set and broke its single-day record in consecutive days last week with 86 new cases Jan. 18, breaking the record of 72 set Jan. 17.

Recent data from Missouri’s Sewershed Project — a program that tests wastewater for COVID-19 variants across the state — only detected the omicron variant of COVID-19 in the Maryville area in its most recent round of tests, which ended Jan. 12.

The week prior, omicron made up 90% of present variants, and delta accounted for the remaining 10%. The last time COVID-19 variants were tested by the project in 2021, delta was the only variant of the virus detected.

“We all knew, we all knew it was here,” Patterson said.

The presence of omicron changes the way Mosaic - Maryville treats COVID-19 patients, President of the hospital Nate Blackford said. Antibody infusions were the main treatment therapy under the delta variant; however, early studies indicate those same infusions are less effective against omicron.

The hospital has begun to use remdesivir, the first drug approved to treat patients with COVID-19. In contrast to antibody infusions, remdesivir is administered over three separate half-hour sessions as opposed to one 90-minute appointment. The treatment option previously had more strict guidelines — it was limited to only hospitalized patients — than antibody infusions and, therefore, wasn’t as widely used.

“I think we’ll see more adoption as we move forward, but right now, not the same level of adoption and therefore administration that we have seen with previous versions,” Blackford said.

Hospitalizations from COVID-19 have seen a slight uptick in the county recently; six individuals were hospitalized with the virus, according to the most recent data available at the time of publication. The measurement is often considered a lagging indicator of case counts, with normally a two-week gap between case spikes and hospitalization spikes.

“We have seen a little bit of a spike, and I try not to overreact to that because it is a relatively small sample size,” Blackford said. Mosaic - Maryville is still battling caregiver absentees as it moves further into the new year.

Blackford said numbers are slightly down from the 20 or so who were out with the virus in previous weeks, but that it’s “still certainly higher than we would want it.”

In a change from last year, health officials will now be battling a “normal” flu season along with COVID-19. The 2020-21 flu season was an anomaly in Missouri and the U.S. as a whole; by the second week of January, total confirmed cases of the flu in the state had not yet topped 1,000 in 2021, according to the Department of Health and Senior Services. The number of confirmed cases as of Jan. 15 was 14,477, which is very similar to the 2019-20 season prior to the arrival of COVID-19.

Flu season is generally a higher volume time of year for the hospital. Blackford said he expects the “typical” flu season to put a strain on resources.

Missouri Conservation Department to host ice fishing clinic at Mozingo

KENDRICK CALFEE
Editor-in-Chief | @calfee_kc

The Missouri Department of Conservation will host a free ice fishing clinic from 9 a.m. to noon Feb. 5 at Mozingo Lake.

Tory Mason, a fisheries management biologist with the MDC, will lead the day’s events with help from other members of the department. The clinic will include tips on best practices, an overview of necessary equipment, what species of fish to target and

what winter behavior and habits are common for fish.

Mason, who has been with the MDC since 2003, first hosted an ice fishing clinic in 2008. He said the goal is to educate and allow for outdoor fun, even in the cold conditions the sport requires.

“It’s giving people who haven’t been ice fishing before or have had doubts about it — providing them free guidance,” Mason said. “We’ll drill the holes for them, and we even have some equipment to lend out.”

Mason said the MDC will be able to provide all necessary gear, but supplies are limited, so participants are encouraged to bring their own fishing tackle. While equipment like poles and tackle may need to be shared among members, Mason said the department will come prepared with plenty of bait.

Ice fishing is another way Missourians can enjoy the nature around them, Mason said, and allows for participants to catch quality fish at a time not many dare to brave the cold.

According to the MDC, ice fishing generally requires temperatures below 20 degrees Fahrenheit and above zero. Ma-



KENDRICK CALFEE | NW MISSOURIAN

Ice fishers survey Mozingo Lake for places to drill holes Jan. 25. The Missouri Department of Conservation will host a free clinic about how to ice fish Feb. 5.

son said as long as these conditions are steady and a minimum of 6 inches of ice is present, the event can take place.

As of late last week, Mozingo had 8-9 inches of ice, a more-than-OK amount for fishing, Mason said.

“The whole thing is basically dictated by the weather,” Mason said. “If there is any inkling that the ice might even have a 1% chance of being unsafe, we will have to cancel.”

Mason said another piece of advice participants will get at the clinic is utilizing small and

light gear instead of big hooks and bait. The goal of the clinic will be to target bluegill and crappie, but there is a chance participants could catch bass, channel catfish or walleye, given Mozingo and other northwest Missouri lake makeup.

Leading up to and during the event, there will be someone directing traffic and parking, pointing participants to the golf course cove where the cabins are located by the lake.

Registration is required for the event so participants can be notified if ice conditions require the MDC to change schedule. The MDC said participants should dress appropriately for long periods of being outside in freezing weather and that Centers for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19 mitigation guidelines will be enforced.

To register for the event, one can call the MDC’s Northwest Regional Office at 816-271-3100 or visit the event page on the department’s website.

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97.1 ditches classic rock, adopts alternative

JAKE PRATER
News Reporter | @JakobLPPrater

Maryville-based 97.1 radio station announced that instead of the usual classic rock lineup, it would switch to alternative rock after a new owner acquired it at the beginning of the year.

Regional Media, an advertising and marketing company that owns 28 radio stations and five television stations across Iowa, Illinois, New Jersey and Hawaii, is the new owner of 97.1 KVVU-FM. It announced a change in programming to the local radio station last week via a news release. This change also comes with a new name, 97.1 KVVU Real Alternative Radio, which started its new lineup of music Jan. 14.

KVVU also picked up the popular morning talk show, “The Bob & Tom Show,” a highly-rated comedy radio talk show that’s been heard across radio stations across the country for years. It airs on 97.1 from 6 a.m.-10 a.m. Monday through Saturday. Regional Media also announced the launch of a new radio station, 95.9 KNIM I’m Country, which is also based in Maryville.

The change comes after Jim and Joyce Cronin transferred

ownership to Regional Media after their retirement following 25 years on the air, which was announced last October and took effect at the beginning of January.

Regional Media has been in business for over 15 years and has won 14 industry awards for its work across its radio stations, TV stations, streaming services, podcasts, digital services, events and creative services.

KVVU features alternative rock and new wave bands of the ‘80s and ‘90s, such as The Cars, Talking Heads, U2, R.E.M. and The Cure. In a press release, Regional Media Rock Formats Director Dave Levora said that the station would also play the genres of classic alternative, indie rock, grunge, punk, new wave and britpop.

“Real Alternative Radio is crafted specifically for people who don’t care to hear the same 150 songs over and over,” Levora said in the press release. “Excited doesn’t begin to describe how I feel about this opportunity to bring Real Alternative Radio to northwest Missouri and southwest Iowa.”

The press release also stated that Levora will add a couple of daily shows. There’s the “Smells Like Lunch Show” where he’ll

only play tunes from the ‘90s, which he considers to be the best decade for alternative music. At 5 p.m., the “Five@5” show starts, featuring a different theme each day, such as playing songs with a particular word in their title or lyrics.

Maryville Mayor Ben Lipiec welcomed the new station and wished the Cronins the best in their retirement in the press release.

“We appreciate the years of service provided by Jim & Joyce Cronin and wish them well in retirement,” Lipiec said in the press release. “We look forward to developing new partnerships with Regional Media to benefit northwest Missouri.”

After 25 years of operation by the original owners and a couple months of preparation, 97.1 is officially owned by Regional Media.

“We’re offering Maryville and northwest Missouri something that is authentically different, an actual honest to goodness alternative,” Levora said in the release. “97.1 KVVU is not a cookie-cutter alternative with a narrow, safe playlist curated by algorithms or soulless research done in auditoriums a thousand miles away from Missouri.”



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN
Morning show host Don Burch sits in a newly remodeled room at 97.1, a maryville-based news station, for the station 95.9 KNIM I’m Country. After 25 years of operation by the original owners and a couple months of preparation, 97.1 is officially owned by Regional Media. The new name is 97.1 KVVU Real Alternative Radio.

Student Senate talks budget, fills seats

SIDNEY LOWRY
News Editor | @sidney_lowry

Student Senate talked about the remaining budget of the year, swore in three new representatives and discussed upcoming events at the Jan. 25 meeting.

Organizational Finance Chair Brady Fritts announced that Student Senate has \$19,125 remaining in the budget for the rest of the year, including appropriations, co-sponsorships and charitable donations. Fritts said that Senate has approximately 59.8% of its overall budget remaining.

Fritts also announced that two organizations have reached out for funds and will be presented before the Senate within the next few meetings.

Last week, senators were asked to nominate people for senior class representative, sophomore class representative and on-campus representative and have them show up to this week’s meeting for a vote.

There was only one candidate up for the position of sophomore class representative, and he was one of the new faces to join Student Senate for the night. Senate voted Dustin Fa-



MADDISYN GERHARDT | NW MISSOURIAN
Sophomore Class Representative Dustin Fagan and freshman on campus representative Drew Belden get sworn in during Student Senates meeting Tuesday night. Senate also swore in Noah Graham for the Interfraternity Council Representative seat.

gan to be the new sophomore class representative.

Fagan said he wanted to join Senate to get more involved on campus and give a voice to students at Northwest.

“I feel great, and I think it is a good opportunity for me to get more involved on campus,” Fagan said.

The other representative voted on and sworn in was Drew Belden for the on-campus rep-

resentative seat. Belden is a part of the Agriculture Living Learning Community, and the senators said they wanted to see more representation of agriculture majors on Senate.

“I’m really excited to get involved on campus and to represent campus life,” Belden said.

Noah Graham was sworn in as the Interfraternity Council representative. Graham is a speech theater education major

and is the IFC philanthropy and community service chair.

President Bailey Hendrickson said there is still a senior class representative spot that remains open that will be discussed at a later meeting.

Along with a senior class representative spot, the city liaison, student regent and the Staff Council representative seats currently sit empty.

Civic Service reminded the

room that it is sponsoring a blood drive with the Community Blood Bank. Students can donate blood from 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Feb. 16 and Feb. 17 in the Tower View Room in the J.W. Jones Student Union.

“Blood is really low across everywhere right now, so please donate if you can,” Secretary Chloe Kallhoff said.

Other Student Senate Business: Senate is still accepting Roll-over Budget applications. The application is available to students and organizations in Presence under the “Forms” tab.

Government Affairs Committee announced that the Legislative Reception is going to be postponed due to COVID-19. There was no announcement of when it will be rescheduled.

Student Activities Council has split the Cosmic Bowling event Jan. 26 into two shifts. The first shift will be from 9:30 p.m.-10:30 p.m., and the second phase will be from 10:30 p.m.-11:30 p.m.

Student Affairs Committee is hosting a giveaway on Senate social media pages starting next week.

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ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN

The Hangar Cinema Side Manager LaTessa Ruehter prepares to give cups to customers before their movie. Northwest professors have partnered with The Hangar to start a lecture series called “Thinking at the Movies,” where students and community members learn the history behind films and the genre after watching the movie.

Professors present movie lecture series

SIDNEY LOWRY
News Editor | @sidney_lowry

Northwest professors have partnered with The Hangar to produce a lecture series called “Thinking at the Movies,” where students and community members can learn the history behind the film and the genre and watch the screening of the movie.

Northwest assistant professor Chase O’Gwin said the idea for this series sprung from a professor he had while obtaining his undergraduate degree. The professor did a similar program at their local library, where they watched and analyzed film. So with a push from his wife, O’Gwin decided to pitch the idea to Maryville’s only movie theater – The Hangar.

“They’ve been looking to do partnerships

with the University for some time and to try to attract students, but I wanted this to be more than just a student thing,” O’Gwin said. “I wanted this to be something that anybody in the community could engage with, not just students.”

The program started in October 2021 with O’Gwin teaching about horror movies with screenings of “The Shining” and “Alien.” After the screenings, he wanted the audience to think outside the box about what some of the things in the movie really meant.

O’Gwin wanted this program to engage people so they didn’t passively watch movies. Rather, they would watch them and then engage in conversation.

“Film today is what the novel was in the 19th century, and it speaks to a lot of us in a lot of different ways and a lot of different

things,” O’Gwin said.

Northwest professor Richard Black teaches a literature and film class, as well as classes in film history, and will be going over the hard-boiled, classic film “The Third Man,” directed by Carol Reed, at 6 p.m. Jan. 27 at The Hangar.

“It’s funny; when I teach film in my classes now, films from the 1990s are our old-style films, or classic films,” Black said. “We’re reaching all the way back right into the mid century, right to the 1940s. There is a wealth of great material out there that seems ancient to us.”

The presentation will be over the 1949 film and the film noir genre in which it’s placed. Black said this genre was created by French film critics who noticed a shift in tone in American movies after World War II.

CRIME LOG

for the week of Jan. 27

Northwest Missouri State University Police Department

Jan. 23
There is a closed investigation for a liquor law violation in Parking Lot 32.

Jan. 22
There is a closed investigation for property damage in Parking Lot 42.

Jan. 20
Katelynn M. Dodd, 18, was cited for operating a vehicle without a valid driver’s license on College Park Drive.

Maryville Police Department

Jan. 25
There is an ongoing investigation for property damage on the 400 block of West Jenkins Street.

There was an accident between **Bailey H. Peterson**, 25, and **Caleb B. Kreizinger**, 19, on West Fourth Street and North Buchanan Street. **Peterson** was issued a citation for failing to yield.

Jan. 24
A lanyard with a key was recovered on the 100 block of North Prairie Street.

There was an accident between **Madelynn M. Taute**, 20, and **Willa M. Auffert**, 86, on North Dewey Street and East Sixteenth Street.

Jan. 23
There is an ongoing investigation for discharging of firearms on the 2600 block of Aurora Avenue.

There was an accident between **Alieah A.L. Kendrick**, 18, and **Patrick Grace** on the 1600 block of South Main Street.

Jan. 22
There is an ongoing investigation for trespassing on the 1000 block of East Second Street.

Jan. 21
There was an accident between **Dhana S. Kuchi**, 24, and **Dakota E. Robertson**, 20, on North Mulberry Street and West Third Street. **Kuchi** was issued a citation for not having a valid driver’s license and failure to obey a posted stop sign.



SILVIA ALBERTI | NW MISSOURIAN

Police Chief Ron Christian goes before City Council and asks for approval for a contract for three new police cars. More additions to the Police Department were made through the American Rescue Plan Act, as the Council allocated \$432,000 for police pay and new mobile data terminals.

ARPA

CONTINUED FROM A1

City Manager Greg McDanel mentioned the workshops the City Council had regarding where this ARPA money could go before the Final Rule was thrown out the window based on the new guidelines.

“Really everything we talked about at the previous workshops depending on what we could do and couldn’t do, we have a free range under that category now with the remainder of the allocation,” McDanel said.

The largest allocation was \$500,000 for a pilot plant for a new water treatment facility. After years of ongoing issues, the city looked into a new water treatment facility to combat the taste and odor of the water. Before a new facility is built, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources calls for a pilot plant to be done first.

The next highest allocation was \$392,000 for police pay. The Maryville Police Department was also allocated \$40,000 for new mobile data terminals in police cars.

Other improvements at local parks were allocated \$215,000

with \$100,000 going to Thompson Splash ‘N Play, \$75,000 for a new dog park at Sunrise Park and \$40,000 to Downtown Pocket Park for improvements like benches and a mural.

The Downtown Façade Improvement Grant Project also received an allocation of \$200,000 in which city business owners can request funds to make changes to things like storefronts, window replacements, exterior improvements and more.

Commercial business owners can have a 50% match of up to \$25,000, while nonprofit businesses can have a 50% match of up to \$50,000 on any project approved.

These funds will be requested through an application that will be outlined at the next City Council meeting Feb. 14, along with additional guidelines and agreements.

Another \$270,000 was given for stormwater drainage and \$110,000 was allocated to municipal court transfer.

This new Final Rule will go into place April 1, and the city has until Dec. 31, 2024, to allocate the remainder of the funds and until Dec. 31, 2026 to spend all of the \$2.3 million in federal funding.

TESTS

CONTINUED FROM A1

An at-home test shortage across the country has increased demand for tests. That has resulted in skyrocketing prices, some costing as much as \$20 a test, for many popular at-home tests.

“There is a need for access to tests, you know. Everyone should have a test available,” Patterson said. “If it helps somebody out there and makes it available for somebody in Nodaway County that otherwise would have had difficulty getting it, then I definitely support that.”

Patterson said he thinks self reporting will be one of the biggest issues with at-home testing, adding that people in the county should report if they test positive for COVID-19.

Health and Well-Being Assistant Vice President Chris Dawe said supply availability and supply chain issues could continue to be factors in test availability overall.

“With fewer people being able to get their own at-home tests, they are either not getting tested or seeking testing at medical centers like our Wellness Center and Mosaic,” Dawe said. “I think both of those things are occurring. So the speculation is that even the high number of positive cases are being significantly underreported due to those not getting tested or not reporting the results of their at-home positive tests.”

Dawe added the Wellness Center is experiencing a considerable amount of people who are choosing not to test and that many of those people are electing to just isolate themselves if they are experiencing any symptoms, which he said is the best thing for people to do in the event that they cannot get tested.

Patterson also said that wearing a mask is important, now more than ever.

“At the end of the day, you know, a lot of cases are spread by droplets, and masks prevent droplets,” Patterson said. “Right now is the time to be smart. It’s the time to practice precaution. It’s time to be careful around people and consider other people.”

Hands-on experience trumps textbooks



CORBIN SMITH
Opinion Editor
@curly_corbs

School sucks. It didn’t always, but ever since high school, I’ve questioned the purpose of topics I’ll never use in my future. I’ve heard education is the key to success or that it opens a plethora of doors, but I still find myself at odds with that statement. Is a college education necessary?

To answer that question, you must understand that college should be a tool for success. Some might define success as peace and good health, while others define it as status and wealth. If you’re going to school for the first option, you might want to reconsider your path on your pursuit of happiness.

If you’re chasing wealth, higher education leads to a higher income. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, in May 2020, workers aged 25 and older with a doctoral or professional degree had higher median weekly earnings than those with master’s and bachelor’s.

I’d define success as being good at your job. For me, that’s conducting valuable interviews, writing compelling stories and gaining a following. The best way for me to get better in these areas is through experience. Unfortunately, lectures and worksheets aren’t the most helpful in preparing me for my future.

Since joining the *Missourian*, I’ve gained enough experience to make my classes seem slightly mundane. I don’t mean to discredit any of my professors, but I learned everything I’ve needed by following my beats. Of course, my internship from this past summer helped, too.

I don’t want to say experience is all you need, because not all fields are identical. Medical professionals should probably understand the science behind their practice. However, if you don’t know how to apply the knowledge, it’s as useful as a paintbrush without paint.

In my experience, much of college has been busy work under the guise of real world preparation. Everything else has either been a prerequisite or general education course. Maybe one day Napoleon’s shortcomings will lead me to a career defining piece.

In a 2017 Harvard Business School study, job postings that require a bachelor’s degree rose 10% from 2007 to 2010. In that same study, the jobs requiring a degree had the same list of responsibilities as jobs that didn’t require a degree. It makes no sense for a job to require education when the same responsibilities somewhere else simply require experience. It seems like a waste of time and money, especially when employers say the same education won’t guarantee a better job.

Obviously, I know college holds some degree of value, or I wouldn’t be in school right now. Northwest gave me the opportunity to find my passion via the *Missourian*, and I realize I’m still learning. But I would rather gain real-world skills than worry about whether my GPA is good enough for a piece of paper that tells employers that I am smart enough to work for them. I guess my portfolio isn’t quite enough.



ALEXANDRIA MESZ CARTOONIST

OUR VIEW:

Biden’s at-home test delivery is nearly two years too late

The war between COVID-19 and those tasked with creating guidelines to prevent its spread is a lengthy one. There have been 1.29 million cases in Missouri and 5,379 cases in Nodaway County during the course of the pandemic. It seems like the virus that’s been an issue for nearly two years now isn’t going away anytime soon. At least the United States Postal Service is sending at-home test kits now.

Yes, after two years of most of the world being frightened of going out into the world of their homes for people to test from the comfort of their homes.

The U.S. Postal Service’s offering of free rapid COVID-19 tests and 400 million N95 masks is part of the Biden Administration’s response to the highly infectious omicron variant. Biden plans on utilizing USPS to ship out 500 million at-home tests to families across the country. However, only four tests per family will be sent, and the website to order these tests sends families to another site that helps people find testing locations near them.

Our question is, why have tests not been offered at home since the beginning of the pandemic when nobody was allowed to leave home? It’s strange to think that it took a more contagious variant of the already dangerous virus to get

people what they need without potentially endangering others.

At a time when less of the country cares about the effects of COVID-19, it seems like Biden’s decision came a little too late. However, the free at-home tests are beneficial to those who are still weary of the virus and adhere to quarantine guidelines. Providing tests for Americans is a step in the right direction to prevent the spread of COVID-19. It definitely should’ve been an option about a year and a half ago when people were more worried about having the virus, but this is a better late than never scenario.

The shipping of COVID-19 tests will protect people who are still worried about leaving their homes, but there aren’t too many people like that left. Since the world has been thrust back into “normality” again, everybody has done their best to coexist with the pandemic rather than fearing it.

Non essential workers are back in offices and quarantine periods are shortening. It’s like the general consensus is to continue living until COVID-19 briefly puts life on pause. For those who continue to take caution, these tests will be beneficial.

The four tests per family poses a few issues. Families with more than four members are somewhat out of

luck. This forces families to either choose to save their tests or have the anxiety of not knowing if someone is sick. With one positive test, it’s possible to isolate one person in their room for the duration of their sickness, but if someone contracts it and doesn’t test or isolate, the entire family would be in jeopardy.

Additionally, the validity of these tests should be in question. The accuracy of rapid testing is slightly lower than PCR tests due to the difference in the tests’ sensitivities. The website to order the tests explains that the four tests are not a polymerase chain reaction test, which some testing locations require payment for or proof of symptoms to receive. So, the at-home tests are basically good for a sound mind. Nonetheless, nobody should leave their home if they’re feeling any symptoms and suspect they could have COVID-19.

Once again, it’s best to continue wearing masks, monitor symptoms accordingly and get vaccinated. If people have better tools to make sure they don’t have COVID-19, that’s better than blatant ignorance of the virus. I guess we’ll see after the Postal Service’s offer is utilized as the year goes on.

For more information on ordering at-home tests, visit www.covidtests.gov.

YOUR VIEW: How do you feel about being able to order at-home COVID-19 tests from the government for free?



VANESSA PURCELL
Senior
History

“I think that it’s a great option because at-home tests are super difficult to find anymore. Doing this lets me have a better opportunity to get a test.”



Ashley Ball
Senior
Instrumental Music Education

“I think it’s great that the government is providing free at-home testing.”



Claire Chesnut
Junior
Geography

“I feel like being able to order COVID tests from the government to take at home is a good thing ... on the other hand, I feel like eventually people will find a way to manipulate these tests to show the outcome they want.

THE STROLLER: Your Bearcat loves flexing intelligence

This Stroller is entirely directed at the person who wrote last week’s. If you are not that particular malcontent individual, who is likely sitting at home watching HBO Max, drinking iced coffee and ignoring their scholastic responsibilities, then you can disregard this.

I am graduating Sumo Fort Lauderdale, and it is my personality trait. Why not make your personality trait something you are good at? Athletes here do it all the time with their Gatorade squeeze bottles and masks below their noses.

We are all paying to do the exact same thing here, and I’m literally just out here doing it better than you. I know that your writing was mostly directed at professors who pay more attention to absences than their spouses, but, still, I’m coming off the top rope because of a few sentences.

You would be into “Euphoria” because it “like, literally, like, re-

minds me, like, so much of, like, my high school,” because you saw one kid snort Smarties off a lunch tray freshman year. You didn’t throw ragers where the quarterback got beaten up by a lovable drug dealer; you drank Natural Light in a soybean field.

All of your not showing up is fine and dandy until we have a group project. People like you are the reason we are still in the middle of a Panera Bread. You’re just out here not doing your part.

You have made your personality that you will be a future bad employee. You are the kind of person to call in for a shift at Taco Bell because you ran out of Juul pods and thought it was an emergency. You grow up to be the kind of person that forces us to put warning labels on shampoo telling you not to ingest it.

The Stroller has been a tradition since 1918 and does not reflect the views of The Northwest Missourian.

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UPCOMING GAMES

NW MBB

vs. Lincoln
7:30 p.m. Jan. 27
Bearcat Arena

vs. Central Missouri
3:30 p.m. Jan. 29
Bearcat Arena

vs. Missouri Southern
6 p.m. Feb. 1
Bearcat Arena

MHS GBB

@ **Cameron Tournament**
Jan. 27-29
Cameron, Missouri

@ **Lathrop**
6:30 p.m. Feb. 1
Lathrop, Missouri

NW WBB

vs. Lincoln
5:30 p.m. Jan. 27
Bearcat Arena

vs. Central Missouri
1:30 p.m. Jan. 29
Bearcat Arena

NW T&F

@ **Jayhawk Classic**
Jan. 28
Lawrence, Kansas

MHS WRES

Varsity Triangular
5:30 p.m. Jan. 27
'Hound Pound

Maryville Tournament
10 a.m. Jan. 29
'Hound Pound

Varsity Triangular
5:30 p.m. Jan. 27
Plattsburg, Missouri

MHS BBB

@ **Cameron Tournament**
Jan. 27-29
Cameron, Missouri

vs. Bishop Ward
6:15 p.m. Feb. 1
'Hound Pound

WOMEN
CONTINUED FROM A8

Nonetheless, the Bearcats were back on the winning side of things with a chance to continue winning against Newman.

On the heels of snapping their losing skid, the Bearcats grabbed a 54-42 win against MIAA foe Newman in Wichita, Kansas — the last stop in the team's three-game road stretch.

Freshman guard Molly Hartnett said it felt awesome to bounce back and get two straight wins.

"I think after this week, we have a little bit of momentum going into next week," said Hartnett, the reigning MIAA Freshman of the Year.

Turnovers were not an issue against Newman, with the Bearcats committing merely six throughout the entirety of the game. Instead, shooting the ball became the issue.

Northwest shot zero for 10 within the first 7 minutes and 45 seconds of the game and ended the first quarter 3-for-14 (22.2%) from the field.

The Bearcats rallied, though, eventually finding a smooth enough flow in the offense to finish at a clip of 40% from the field.

"It just came down to the fact that we didn't shoot it very well," Meyer said. "Which is never a good thing, but our kids just kept playing and battled and eventually pulled it out."

Now the women will return to Bearcat Arena for a two-game stretch against Lincoln (5-13, 1-11 MIAA) and Central Missouri (14-6, 10-3 MIAA).

"I'm super excited to play at home again," Hartnett said. "You have lots of fans, and it's awesome to play with home court advantage and have people who want to cheer you on."

The first contest is Jan. 27 against Lincoln. This is the second of two games against the Blue Tigers for the Bearcats — the first ended in a 56-43 win for Northwest Dec. 11 in Jefferson City, Missouri. The second is against Central Missouri, the team that ended Northwest's seven-game win streak by way of a 60-57 win for the Jennies Dec. 13 in Warrensburg, Missouri.

Meyer said they're prepared



JON WALKER | NW MISSOURIAN

Northwest women's basketball redshirt-freshman guard Molly Hartnett drives into the lane during the Bearcats' 58-52 loss to MIAA foe Washburn Jan. 17 in Topeka, Kansas. It marked the women's third straight loss at the time.

for both rematches.

"We always talk about how it's a league where we feel we can beat anybody, but at the end of the day, anybody can beat us, too," Meyer said. "We have to make sure we focus on ourselves and get better everyday."

After being slated to finish ninth in the conference in a pre-season coaches and media poll, Northwest has been able to take the league by storm with an 8-4 record in the team's first 12 conference games to sit at sixth in the MIAA going into the week's slate of games.

Hartnett said they Bearcats are far from finished.

"I think we haven't reached our potential, yet," Hartnett said. "I think it's time to get our team to that potential. I think it's coming. We've shocked quite a few people, and I think we can finish even higher than where we are right now. People don't expect us to be as good as we are, but we're playing well, and we're playing together."

way toward assuring you that — similar to earlier in this week's mailbag — if McCollum's not concerned, I'm not sure why anybody else would be.

Walk The Talk is a mailbag that focuses on all things Northwest Athletics. To submit a question for the next edition of the mailbag, tweet @ByJon-Walker or email j.walker.missourian@gmail.com.

REBOUND
CONTINUED FROM A8

McCollum said the Bearcats' second-leading scorer is "doing OK" and "will hopefully be back Thursday," when they start a two-game home stand by hosting Lincoln (1-13, 0-9 MIAA).

Then, two days later, they'll welcome another conference opponent, Central Missouri (8-8, 5-7 MIAA), to Bearcat Arena for an MIAA showdown.

"We generally like the second time around," McCollum said. "You get film. You can make some adjustments. ... We feel like we won handedly at both places. You have to be careful in thinking, 'Oh, now we're at home. Now it shouldn't be that difficult.' That's definitely not the case."

Northwest nabbed an 84-54 win over Lincoln in the first meeting, a victory highlighted by a career-high 26 points from redshirt-freshman guard Daniel Abreu.

The Bearcats followed that with a 77-53 triumph against Central Missouri two days later, when all five starters scored in double figures.

One of the keys to being able to outscore those two conference opponents by a collective 54 points was that Northwest was able to have its regularly scheduled practices, a routine they carried all of the way until their last game of the semester — a 101-63 win over MIAA rival Missouri Western Dec. 18 in Bearcat Arena.

Around that time, McCollum said, the Bearcats were starting to "hit a stride" and fall into a rhythm. Then winter break happened.

McCollum sent the players home to spend time with their families for the holidays before having them return Dec. 28, a day before closing their non-conference slate with a match-up against Saint Mary (Kan.).

They practiced once that day and again the next morning prior to beating Saint Mary 85-59. A few days later, the Bearcats took down MIAA foe Pittsburg State 74-64 before a COVID-19 outbreak halted the program's

activities for a week.

In short, the 'Cats hadn't had a "real week of practice," as McCollum said, since the turn of the new year.

"We need to get back to our habits. You develop a lot of bad habits if you don't practice," McCollum said. "I think this week will be good for that. We've got a few good days of practice in, then we'll get ready for Thursday."

"Both teams are gonna be ready.

Both teams wanna beat you."

- BEN

MCCOLLUM

NORTHWEST MEN'S BASKETBALL COACH

"'Everybody goes through it and whatnot,' is what they say, but it does really impact your rhythm. We're fortunate enough to have experience, so they're able to grind through it and still win basketball games, regardless. But it affects your rhythm, shocking. We're still trying to get that back, but we will."

They'll have a chance to get back in the swing of things this week-end, all while junior guard Trevor Hudgins is 48 points from being the school's all-time leading scorer.

Hudgins won't care too much about his personal accolades. He never usually does, and that's because he's focused on doing what he can to help the team win.

And with a target on their backs from walloping them the first time around, Hudgins just might have to rewrite a few lines in the program's record book in order to pave the way for the dawn of a new winning streak.

"Both teams are gonna be ready," McCollum said. "Both teams wanna beat you."

WTT
CONTINUED FROM A8

Hudgins is more than capable of willing the Bearcats to success alongside the likes of Diego Bernard, Luke Waters and Isaiah Jackson. I mean, Hudgins scored a game-high 39 points during the loss to the Bronchos.

Dreamer has massively stepped up this season, transi-

tioning into the "trigger" player of the Bearcats' offense, as McCollum would say. Each Northwest player has a specific role toward making the whole operation work, and it's difficult to lose a post presence similar to the one Dreamer has provided so far this season.

The forward is "doing OK," McCollum said Tuesday afternoon, and that should go a long

Maryville wrestling returns from trip to MEC Tournament with four medals

NATHAN ENGLISH
Managing Editor | @nathan_3nglish

Eight Maryville wrestlers made the 45-mile trek Jan. 22 to Benton High School for the Midland Empire Conference Tournament, and four of them returned with medals, including junior Kolt Watkins, who headlined the trip by taking first place overall in the heavyweight division.

"It was good to see him just come out, get to business and do his job," coach Howard Dumke said.

Watkins, who finished second in the same tournament almost exactly a year prior, had his eyes set on the top of the podium since that day. The Spoofhound heavyweight was first introduced to the sport by his father and has been wrestling since he was six years old.

The amount of time he has spent on the mat gives him an advantage over the opposition, Watkins said.

"He's wrestling at 250 (pounds). So, he gave up 30 pounds to a couple of his opponents that were weighing 275 to 280," Dumke said. "So, he's giving up a lot of weight and still winning, still dominating."

"I mean, great technique wins matches over anything," Watkins said.

Dumke said Watkins has the speed of someone who weighs 20 pounds less than him but the

strength of someone who weighs 20 pounds more than him.

Watkins' ultimate goal is to qualify for state. It's one he's had in mind since freshman year, but it's a tall task in Maryville's district. Of the 14 other schools in Class 2 District 4, five placed in the top 10 of state last year, but Watkins said if he sticks to his gameplan, he'll be there in the end.

4

Four of Maryville's eight wrestlers received medals at the MEC Tournament

"This year, I think, is the year I'm going to punch my ticket," Watkins said.

Junior Zeke Adamson narrowly missed taking home a medal himself at the conference meet. Adamson recently returned to the team after battling an illness, which took him out of practice for multiple weeks. That's a situation that has become rather familiar to this year's Spoofhounds.

Similar to seemingly every sports team in the country, Maryville has battled COVID-19 throughout the season.

The struggle with the virus this year has been worse than last. The amount of wrestlers quarantined and infected has increased, and that's made them more cautious and team focused.

"Before, you talk about situations and they can't put themselves in other people's shoes. And now, it seems like everyone understands what everyone else is going through," Dumke said. "It helps them be more supportive and understand what everyone's going through outside of the wrestling room."

"We're thinking about each other; we're not thinking just, 'Oh, I'll be all right to wrestle,'" senior Drew Spire added.

The virus, along with a recent slew of injuries, has caused the team to rely heavily on the leadership from the upperclassmen like Watkins, Adamson and Spire. Dumke said the three wrestlers have, in many ways, taken on coaching roles themselves and helped "continue the culture" of the program.

Spire is among those on the team recently bitten by the injury bug in addition to working through a knee injury that kept him out of the competition at Benton. A reigning state qualifier, Spire has plans to medal at state this year. He plans to return to competition Jan. 27, when the Spoofhounds host the Maryville Triangular.

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Six 'Cats rewrite record books



JON WALKER | NW MISSOURIAN
Former Northwest track and field runner Hiba Mahgoub poses with her ring, which was awarded to her Jan. 22 at the Northwest Open in the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse, from winning the national championship in the 200-meter dash. It was the first national title in the program history.

DAVID DERKS
Missourian Reporter | @NWMSports

After making its 2022 debut at the Washburn Rust Buster Jan. 15 in Topeka, Kansas, Northwest track and field returned to the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse Jan. 22 for its first home event of the new year: the Northwest Open.

Six Bearcats notched their way into the school history books, and many more set personal records against more than 15 other schools.

Sophomore Blake Morgan set a personal best and became only the second Bearcat in school history to clear 7 feet in the high jump with a mark of 2.14 meters (7 feet, 1/4 inch).

“Coming into the year, 7 feet was the goal,” Morgan said of his new personal-best jump. “It’s been the goal pretty much since I’ve gotten here, and I knew this year was going to be the closest I’ve gotten to it with the off-season training and the strength that I’ve gained.”

Coach Brandon Masters said that with his performance on Saturday, Morgan has already secured his spot at nationals.

“[He’s] No. 2 in the nation right now. He’s solidified his ticket to nationals — 2.14 meters always goes to nationals,” Masters said. “He’ll have a little bit different mindset this year. We’re not chasing a mark, and

he’s already in. So we can really focus on getting ready to do well in conference and nationals.”

Freshman Joel Dos Santos also had a big day, as he took second in the high jump with a mark of 7.06 meters (23 feet, 2 inches) and got first in the 60-meter dash with a time of 6 seconds and 83 milliseconds. Dos Santos credits his team as a big reason for his success on Saturday.

“There was a really great energy here. I think the thing that helped me a lot to perform really great was the team cheering,” Dos Santos said. “That really helped me to perform really well.”

His 60 performance was one he didn’t see coming.

“I didn’t actually expect that I was gonna do well in the 60,” Dos Santos said. “I was more confident in my high jump, but that’s track. It’s something that happens sometimes.”

Amber Owens is among the six Bearcats who put themselves in the school history books. She ran a personal best 17:46.60 and ranked first in the 5,000-meter run. That time placed Owens fourth all-time.

The men’s 4x400-meter relay team of senior R.J. Williams, freshman Samuel Maldonado, redshirt freshman Prince Griffin, and junior Federico Crisci placed second with a time of 3:15.92 — the seventh-best time in program history.

Prior to the meet, Masters surprised former Northwest track and field runner Hiba Mahgoub with a ring she earned by winning the 200-meter dash at the NCAA Division II Outdoor Championships May 29 in Alendale, Michigan.

“The cool thing is that she didn’t know it was coming. She had come to work the meet and help us out as an alumni, and we love that,” Masters said. “And with her coming back, she’s the first national champion ever in Northwest history. To do what she did, and get that national championship ring, it was really cool. It was fun to watch her — she was very excited.”

After a successful week of competing, Masters said it was nice to see where everyone was prior to the ‘Cats heading to the Jayhawk Classic Jan. 28 in Lawrence, Kansas.

“It was nice to get back after winter break and have a competition so we can kind of see where we are. I think that’s the big thing — our sport is, work real hard all fall, send kids home for a long time, and then hope we get them back where they’re pretty fit,” Masters said. “And we did a really good job over break. We saw a lot of performances that I didn’t expect, and we’re coming back strong, which is exciting.”

Maryville preps for rematch in Cameron Tourney

WESLEY MILLER
Assistant Sports Editor | @wesleymiller360

Stretching from the Rocky Mountains to Ohio, U.S. Highway 36 is nearly 1,414 miles long. But just three miles south of this 96-year-old road is Cameron High School — the site for the Cameron Tournament and the site for Maryville boys basketball’s latest win.

The Spoofhounds only had to use 35 of those 1,414 miles on U.S. 36 to get to their destination, and the journey ended up being worth it.

For the 10th consecutive year, Maryville (8-8) claimed a spot in the tournament, and this year the ‘Hounds had some momentum. As winners of three of their last four games, there was reason they were excited.

That momentum continued with a 49-39 win over Lawson (7-12) Jan. 25.

“I think, on the defensive side, our energy was really good,” Maryville coach Matt Stoecklein said. “On the offensive side, very early, we took not-great shots.”

The shooting from Maryville kept it a close game heading into halftime, with the Spoofhounds having the 22-20 advantage.

Going into the third quarter, things started to come a bit easier for Maryville.

The Spoofhounds outscored the Cardinals 15-10 in the third to give themselves a 6-point



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN
Maryville boys basketball sophomore guard Derek Quinlin tries to pass the ball through defenders during the Spoofhounds’ 56-32 win over East Buchanan Jan. 11 at the Hound Pound.

lead going into the final quarter.

“Our defensive energy created some turnovers, and every shot they had was challenged,” Stoecklein said.

Just at the end of the third, things could’ve gone grim very fast. Junior guard Caden Stoecklein went down in pain following a buzzer-beater 2-point shot to end the quarter. Having scored 12 up to that point in the game, the loss of Caden Stoecklein

could’ve been a huge blow.

It wasn’t and it was, partly due to the efforts of junior forward Keaton Stone. The 6-foot-6-inch big man paved the way with 15 points on the night to help propel the team to a 10-point win.

“I think my performance was great,” Stone said. “My goal has been to work harder, getting offensive boards and whatnot. I’m playing a different role than normal — trying to be a traditional post and stay down low most of the game — but I think it worked out.”

As of Jan. 26, Matt Stoecklein said Caden Stoecklein’s injury was groin-related, and his chances of playing in the upcoming games has not yet been decided.

While the potential loss of Caden Stoecklein could be huge for the team, Matt Stoecklein said he believes in its depth.

“We just now need other kids to step up,” Matt Stoecklein said. “We got some young and

inexperienced guards that this is an opportunity for them to step up, but I feel much better after Lawson.”

The first game the Spoofhounds could possibly be without Caden Stoecklein is against Smithville (11-5) Jan. 27 in Maryville’s second game of the Cameron Tournament.

Maryville and Smithville met at the Savannah Tournament Nov. 30, which served as each team’s first game of the season. The Spoofhounds edged out a 54-47 victory over the Warriors. Since then, the Warriors have lost a mere four games.

Smithville played Lawson Jan. 24 itself and won handily, 73-31. It’s no secret the Warriors are an offensively explosive team, averaging 63.9 points per contest. In comparison, the Spoofhounds average 47.8.

The ‘Hounds have won nine consecutive games against the Warriors, with the last loss being in January 2016.

To Stone and his coach, all of that doesn’t matter.

“This is a game either team could win,” Stone said.

“We’re really going to step up our defense,” Matt Stoecklein said. “No. 1, we’ll always stress keeping the ball in front of you, contain, contest and only let them get one shot. This is a different team than what we’ve beaten in the past, and their players’ experience and the team’s depth has improved from the years past.”

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'Cats look to
bounce back
after road loss

JON WALKER
Sports Editor | @ByJonWalker

After Northwest men's basketball started a three-game road trip with a 71-63 win over MIAA foe Washburn Jan. 17 in Topeka, Kansas, coach Ben McCollum knew there was a bigger task ahead. In his 13th year at the helm of the program, McCollum has seen a lot of success while leading the Bearcats to three national titles in a five-year span. That's how he knew MIAA foe Central Oklahoma, ranked 18th in the country entering a matchup Jan. 20 with the then-No. 2 Northwest, was going to be an issue. "I think they're just really, really good, offensively. They've got a lot of talent," McCollum said Jan. 17. "Probably the most talented team in the league — just top to bottom, got a ton of it. We'll have our hands full, that's for sure." Roughly 72 hours after Northwest made its way back to Maryville, Central Oklahoma proved McCollum's statement to be nothing but true. The Bronchos, led by senior forward Isaiah Wade's team-high 29 points, used overtime to get a 76-75 upset win and hand the Bearcats merely their second loss of the year — only their fifth since the start of the 2018-19 season.

Two days later, Northwest responded with an 82-53 triumph over Newman, a team that's second to last in the conference as of Jan. 25. That was seemingly all McCollum needed to see to know it wasn't time to let panic set in. "No concerns," McCollum said Jan. 25 at the Northwest Athletics Media Luncheon. "More reaffirmed that we can be good. We've just gotta keep moving forward." Of course, the Bearcats were expected to take care of business in the final installment of their latest road stretch against a team that entered with one meager win against MIAA opponents. More impressively, they did so without sophomore forward Wes Dreamer, who has averaged a career-best 13.4 points and 5.5 rebounds throughout 18 games. Dreamer played the first three minutes during the loss to Central Oklahoma before exiting with an injury after a scramble for a loose ball. He checked in a few minutes later, then checked out again and never returned. Despite dressing out and going through pregame warmups, Dreamer sat on the bench for the entirety of the 29-point win over Newman.

SEE REBOUND | A6



JON WALKER | NW MISSOURIAN
Northwest men's basketball junior guard Diego Bernard shoots a 3-pointer during the Bearcats' 71-63 win over MIAA foe Washburn Jan. 17 at Lee Arena in Topeka, Kansas. Bernard had 9 points and five rebounds against the Ichabods.



JON WALKER | NW MISSOURIAN
Northwest women's basketball redshirt-freshman guard Emma Atwood drives in for a layup during the Bearcats' 58-52 loss to MIAA foe Washburn Jan. 17 in Topeka, Kansas. Atwood finished 3 points and three rebounds.

Women nab pair of road wins
before first rematches of year

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Following back-to-back-to-back losses to conference foes Fort Hays State, Nebraska-Kearney and Washburn, Northwest women's basketball was seemingly stuck in a rut. That was until the Bearcats made the 400-mile trek Jan. 20 to Edmond, Oklahoma, with a chance to officially put the three losses in the rearview mirror against MIAA opponent Central Oklahoma Jan. 22. Heading into the matchup, the Bronchos (11-8) were not sharing the same struggles as the Bearcats after winning four of their last five games. At the end, it was not the home team celebrating in Hamilton Field House, as North-

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The women won two games last week by a combined 22 points

west defeated Central Oklahoma 79-69. "Our kids battled and got a big victory," Northwest coach Austin Meyer said. During the game against Washburn — the last of the three-game losing stretch — Meyer said he felt as if the players weren't really into the game. But that was not the case against the Bronchos.

At the end of the first quarter, the Bearcats held a 19-11 lead and a 32-23 lead heading into halftime. It wasn't easy, though, as Northwest committed seven turnovers in the first 10 minutes of play after committing a combined 11 turnovers in the first quarter in the games against Nebraska-Kearney and Washburn. "The way Central Oklahoma plays, they didn't press us as much as they press other teams, but they really get out, deny and play really aggressive defense," Meyer said. "A lot of those turnovers in that game were them forcing us into them. We did a much better job in the second half, and I felt we came out ready to play. We still turned it over too much in that game early."

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WALK THE TALK:

Any reason
to worry
about the
NW men?
And more

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For the first time since football season, and for the first time since last year, welcome to Walk the Talk, the mailbag column where you'll find answers to all of the questions people might have about Northwest Athletics. Is there a reason to be worried about men's basketball losing to Central Oklahoma? Nope, there sure isn't. If you take a look back to last year, the Bearcats finished their 2020-21 title-winning season with two losses. They were handed the latter of the two toward the end of the year, but, still, there's no reason to worry about a program led by Ben McCollum. They're currently fighting for the No. 1 seed in Division II's Central Region, but there's a lot of time left — including 11 regular-season games and the MIAA Tournament — before the regional rankings are set. McCollum isn't worried, ei-

ther. While talking to Bearcat Radio Network after the loss to the Bronchos, he said: "Hopefully we play these guys again. Can't wait until if we do. ... We fought as hard as we could fight, and it's just one of those games we weren't able to win. Just gotta be better." He followed that up by telling reporters that he's "more affirmed that (the Bearcats) can be good" and that they "just gotta keep moving forward." If he's not worried, I'm not sure why anybody else would. After all, getting into the post-season is the hard part. Once they're there — which they will be — anything can happen, regardless of a loss in January. What would your best track and field event be? Fun fact: I used to run hurdles in middle school, and despite tripping over one in my second-to-last race, I never finished worse than fourth place. The hurdles are way too tall for me now, though, as I stand at a towering 5-foot-4, so I'd absolutely have to rely on my speed. After talking to Corbin Smith, the Missourian's opinion editor and a member of Northwest's track program, I've decided that it'd probably be best if I did the 60-meter dash because of my short-burst speed. Don't get confused, I'd finish sixth in a six-person race. Do the Northwest men have a lineup strong enough to win the title? In short, yes. The Bearcats have to stay healthy, though. Sophomore forward Wes Dreamer went down during Northwest's latest loss, a 76-75 defeat in overtime courtesy of then-No. 18 Central Oklahoma, and that forced junior guard Trevor Hudgins to put up a program-record 29 shot attempts. SEE WTT | A6

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